Effective Weight Management Program (WMP) implementation begins with good planning. Be aware of program implementation issues ahead of time in order to anticipate potential problems.

Issue #1: Pre-program planning

- Write a plan for program **implementation** and **evaluation** before the program begins.
- Include **all** program **team members** when writing the plan.
- Be sure to **get input** for the plan from **other stakeholders**, such as potential participants and program support staff.
- Include well-written **goals** and **objectives** in the plan.

> HELPFUL HINT: Use scientific evidence and lessons learned from
>
> other weight management programs to support program planning decisions.

Issue #2: Pre-screening

- Will there be any **prescreening** for the WMP?
- **Where** and **when** will the prescreening be given? **Who** will give it?
- What **physical measures** (like height, weight, abdominal girth, etc.) will be taken?
- Will **labs** be drawn? Who will **pay** for the labs?
- What is the course of action if a **significant health problem** is found through the prescreening?

    ⇒ **LESSON LEARNED:** Prescreening appointments given **at** the first class instead of prescreening done **prior to** the first class cut down on the number of prescreened no-shows.

Issue #3: Logistics and scheduling

- Will the WMP need a **classroom**? How **often**?
- Will the program include **tours** of the commissary or **trips** to restaurants?
- What about **cooking**? **Where** will that happen? **Who** will buy the groceries?

    ⇒ **LESSON LEARNED:** Adapt logistics to meet the needs of your target population. Make sure any 'field trips' are convenient for program participants.

Issue #4: Evaluation

- Your evaluation plan should be tied directly to the program **goals** and **objectives**.
- How will you be able to **prove** that the WMP is **successful**?
- Ask the question: **what** will be accomplished by **when**? Be specific.

    ⇒ **LESSON LEARNED:** "Good news stories" are great, but cold, hard facts are what keep the resources coming in to support the program.

Bottom line
Thorough pre-program planning is essential to anticipate potential problems before they occur. A comprehensive program plan will result in a WMP that is efficiently managed for maximum impact.